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ABSTRACT

This paper, one in a series of Unesco technical information reports, discusses education in Poland and examines decision making. The Polish school system consists of primary schools, general secondary schools, vocational secondary schools, vocational schools not giving the right to enter third-level schools, higher post secondary schools, and third-level schools. Education starts at age seven and is obligatory until 16. Educational policy is determined by top level decision-making groups, particularly by Sejm (the Parliament). The Minister of Education and the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education, and Technology are in charge of the implementation of educational policy. The Ministers prepare teacher education programs and make all the decisions concerning course content and teaching methods. Various research institutes assist them. With the exception of higher education, the organizational hierarchy has three stages. The Minister of Education appoints school superintendents who are in charge of securing material conditions necessary for the functioning of schools. The school superintendents, in turn, appoint school inspectors and headmasters who coordinate and control the functioning of the schools. The organizational structure of higher education consists of two levels only. The Minister is the direct supervisor of rectors whom he appoints. (Author/RM)

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THE ROLE OF INFORMATION IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS CONCERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN POLAND

by

Jan Kluczyński and Stefan Kwiatkowski

SP 012 355

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FOREWORD

As was agreed unanimously by Unesco's General Conference at its 1976 session in Nairobi, studies and information focusing on educational policies, planning and the management and evaluation of educational reforms rank among the priorities of the Organization's educational activities. Dissemination of information is potentially an important activity to complement and strengthen effective technical cooperation between Member States.

Within this framework, it was decided to distribute more widely the abundance of technical information produced by Unesco regarding educational policy, planning, administration and facilities. Such information is generated by expert seminars, project preparation and evaluation, educational planning missions requested by Member States, etc. The Division of Educational Policy and Planning is therefore reproducing selections of this material under the general title of "Reports and Studies" and is disseminating copies to persons who may find them useful in their work.

These "Reports and Studies" are of two types : those with a subject orientation (numbered S.1, S.2, etc.) and those with a country orientation (numbered C.1, C.2, etc.). The subject papers deal with such topics as educational policies and planning, educational administration, educational facilities, international cooperation in education, relations between education and work, education and the New International Economic Order, etc. The country papers are either brief profiles of the educational system of a country, with a focus on the twenty-five least developed countries, or deal with one specific aspect of the educational system of the country concerned.

Some of these papers are desk studies based on information already available in Unesco ; others are occasional staff papers, reflecting upon priority areas in the Division's programme. The series is intended for field programme officers of Unesco's Operational Division and other colleagues at Unesco Headquarters, for Unesco field experts, Regional Offices, interested organizations and institutions outside Unesco, and in general for the interested public.

The papers have been selected because of the professional interest of the ideas presented therein. We wish to stress that they are an expression of the ideas of their individual authors and they do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of Unesco. Readers should also keep in mind that the authors have frequently prepared this material in a language that is not their own.

We trust that these "Reports and Studies" will form one of the first links in the networking services in educational policy, planning, administration and facilities which Unesco is about to launch.

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Fig. 1. Polish education (as today)

Fig. 2. Proposed system of education

Fig. 3. Organizational structure of primary and secondary education

Fig. 4. Organization structure of higher education

Fig. 5. Institutions of higher education in macroregions

Jan Kluczyński
Stefan Kwiatkowski

The Role of Information in the Decision-Making Process Concerning the Development of Education in Poland

1. Introduction and basic data

The system of education in Poland is presently at the stage of reform. As decisions hitherto made are limited to lower levels of the system, and the reform has been embarked upon only recently, our analysis will concern the existing system. When needed the analysis will be supplemented with remarks about changes foreseen but not implemented yet.

Poland has an area of 312 677 sq. km. The number of inhabitants in 1976 was more than 34,5 milion. In the school year 1975/76 there were 4447,5 thous. pupils in eight-class primary schools, which gives 1254 pupils per 10 thous. population [in what follows figures will be given for the same year, if not otherwise indicated]. The number of pupils in secondary schools was 1613,3 thous., of which 622 thous. in general schools and 991,3 thous. in vocational schools. Jointly there were 464 pupils of secondary schools per 10 thous. population. In vocational schools whose alumni are not entitled to enter third level schools there were 924,1 thous. pupils which gives 258 pupils per 10 thous. population. In post-secondary vocational schools there were 107,4 thous. students [36 per 10 thous. population], and in third level schools 468,1 thous. [142 per 10 thous. population], of which 283,2 thous. intramural students and 184,9 thous. professionally working people.

Altogether 9173,7 thous. pupils and students were formally enrolled [2612 per 10 thous. population]. Moreover, there were 102,5 thous. pupils in special primary, general secondary and vocational secondary schools. In Poland, therefore, every fourth inhabitant is formally enrolled in some school. This numerous population of pupils and students was

tought by 340,3 thous. teachers, of which 193,3 thous. in primary schools, 21,1 thous. in general secondary schools, 76,1 thous. in vocational secondary schools of all levels, and 49,8 thous. in third level schools.

The process of education is organized in 15563 primary schools, 1279 general secondary schools, 5495 vocational secondary schools, 3996 vocational schools not giving the right to enter third level schools, 936 higher post-secondary schools, and 89 third level schools.

2. Organizational structure of the educational system

In Poland, a socialist country with a central planning system, goals and principles of the educational policy are shaped by the top-level decision-making organs, particularly by Sejm [the Parliament]. Decisions about goals, fields and scope of education are taken at so high levels not only for axiological reasons [education is considered to be the most valuable good and an element of the most desirable social consumption], but also for pragmatic ones. This is so because a right balance between human and material potential of the national economy can be determined only at the highest decision-making levels. Thus the Parliament and particularly its committee of education, and the Cabinet - the top administrative organ of the country, as also subordinated to it the top planning organ - the Planning Commission, are involved in the decision-making process.

The highest-level administrative organs responsible for the implementation of the educational policy are: the Minister of Education and the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology. Then the management of the organizational system of education requires coordination between these two ministers and their ministries as executive bodies. The organizational division of the educational system results from particular conditions proper to third level education. It is strongly connected with the state-wide system of research and development. It is also directed and financed differently than the lower level educational

institutions. Such an arrangement has, however, some drawbacks and is often being criticized, especially from the viewpoint of complications in the decision-making process concerning main problems of implementation of the educational policy. In this criticism attention is often given to the fact that other socialist countries have developed different organizational forms of administration of the educational system. Both above mentioned ministers are responsible for the complex of the educational policy of the state. The main instruments of influence and control over those who implement the educational process are: the organizational hierarchy and the system of financing.

With exception of higher education the organizational hierarchy has three stages. The Minister of Education is the superior of school superintendents whom he appoints [there is one superintendent in each of the existing 49 voivodships, which in turn are divided in communities]. School superintendents are regional organs of the state administration and act in accordance with instructions issued by the minister. On the other hand, they cooperate closely with the regional organs of state authority and with other regional organs of state administration. Close cooperation is needed especially for securing material conditions necessary for the functioning of schools. As a rule schools are financed from regional budgets, controlled by the regional administration. This is so for all primary and secondary general schools. Only a small part of vocational schools is financed from the central budget. The majority of them are financed also from regional budgets.

School superintendents appoint in turn school inspectors in towns and in districts of large cities. They are representatives of the superintendent on whose behalf they coordinate and control the functioning of schools as the executive units of the educational system. Superintendents and inspectors control and coordinate activities of schools financed both from central and regional budgets.

A particular kind of schools are community collective primary schools. They are composed of an eight-class school situated at the site of the

community and of local branches situated in particular localities and having only four classes. At present community collective primary schools form ten per cent of all primary schools. In future they will become the dominating type of primary education in rural areas. Headmasters of community collective primary schods are appointed by superintendents and directly dependent upon them. It means that they have all rights of school inspectors.

The organizational structure of higher education consists of two levels only. The Minister is the direct superior of rectors whom he appoints. Teaching activities of institutions of higher education are financed mainly from the central budget. The existing system allows, however, for the financing of teaching activities by various organizations, economic as well as non-economic ones, on the basis of agreements about cooperation, e.g. in the area of postgraduate education.

Formal education is supplemented by a system of courses providing additional education and professional improvement. These courses are organized by various social and professional organizations on the basis of training within or outside working place. There are three degrees of such courses. The first degree comprises training on the job, vocational training and improvement of skills of workers. Courses of the second degree comprise the improvement of skills of employees whose work requires secondary education, and courses of the third degree - the improvement of qualifications of those whose work requires higher education. The curricula of these courses are subject to approval by the office of the school superintendent [1st degree], the Ministry of Education [2nd degree] and the Ministry of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology [3rd degree]. The above mentioned organs are also responsible for control of the standard of the courses as also for coordination of their curricula with programs realized within formal education. Contrary to the basic rule of free formal education at all its levels participation in

courses is against payment. The costs are usually borne by the organizations which employ and delegate the students, and only exceptionally by the students themselves. In 1976 there were 1114 thous. students enrolled at courses of all degrees and 920 thous. alumni.

3. The structure of decision-making processes within the framework of universal education

Universal education encompasses the system of 8-class primary schools. Education starts at the age of 7 and is obligatory until 16 years of age. At present preparations are under way to introduce universal 10-year schools, completion of which would give the most able young people the right to enter university or other institution of higher education. The remaining alumni would be directed to post-secondary schools or to work, having equally the right to enter institutions of higher education after fulfilment of certain conditions. However this system is still under discussion, and the 8-class primary school constitutes the basis of the actually existing system. Basic assumptions and principles of the present system as also of the educational system put forward are respectively illustrated in figs. 1 and 2, the organizational structure of primary and secondary education in fig. 3, and that of higher education in fig. 4.

Because of the universality of education at primary level the planning models used here are limited to the securing of a proper educational standard. By assumption alumni of primary schools should have equal qualifications and skills. This goal is attained by:

a/ suitable quantitative and qualitative preparation of the teaching staff,
b/ preparation of adequate and country-wide uniform curricula for particular subjects as also of uniform instruction means,
c/ providing accomodations and teaching and auxiliary equipment,
d/ suitably combining the above mentioned factors.

The preparation of the teaching staff is a problem facing the organs responsible for the implementation of the educational policy. On the basis

of country's experience as also of experiences of other countries these organs make decisions concerning the proportions between teaching staff and pupils. The zone of possible options is limited however by:

- the size of the future population of pupils [which is fairly easy to determine even with a territorial breakdown],
- the existing teaching staff and its qualifications,
- possibilities of effecting territorial shifts in teaching staff,
- the output of the system of higher education which prepares the teaching staff,
- possibilities of supplementary education and improvement of qualifications of the teaching staff,
- material means which could be devoted to education and improvement of qualifications as also to other steps connected with the preparation of the teaching staff.

Due to considerable shortage of teaching staff with sufficiently high qualifications [particularly in rural areas], and to limited possibilities of territorial shifts, a massive action of educating and improving the qualifications of teachers has been launched forth in recent years. During the period 1970-1975 as many as 31782 teachers received university education, of which 17551 within the system of studies for professionally working people. Suitable quantitative and qualitative education of the teaching staff requires efficient cooperation between all levels of the educational system. The top authorities have to be permanently informated about the qualifications of teachers and also about propositions and possibilities of improving their level through formal studies or other forms of supplementary education. The Ministry of Education should cooperate closely with the Ministry of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology in fixing admission limits for particular types and fields of studies. In a situation of incomplete scolarization at university level the needs of the educational system are competitive with respect to the needs of other sectors. This requires the intervention of top-level decision-making organs, which in recent years accorded great priority to the

education of teachers.

Formal education of teachers is supplemented by the improvement of their qualifications which is being organized within the educational system. Programmes to this end are prepared centrally by the Ministry of Education with the help of its Institute of Teachers' Education. This institute performs research work as well as teaching. It has specific tasks and specific organizational structure. Its research work is concerned mainly with: the analysis of programmes of education of teachers in institutions of higher education; the analysis of efficiency of the processes of education and self-education of teachers; elaboration of model conceptions of education and improvement of qualifications; the analysis of changes in functions of teacher profession and their structure; the examination of real qualifications of teachers and managerial staff of schools; the analysis of processes of selection for the teacher profession and of professional adaptation of the new entrants in the profession. With regard to teaching the institute has the following tasks: the elaboration of content, forms and methods of educating and improving the qualifications of teachers; the elaboration of principles and criteria for directing teachers to various forms of education and professional improvement; improvement of qualifications of teachers and of the managerial staff of schools; programming of the content of publications and other means of instruction for the education and improvement of qualifications of teachers. The institute realizes its complicated functions through the network of its local branches. They are directly subjected to the institute but cooperate closely with the school superintendents. In these local branches the qualifications of teachers are examined, changes in the content of their organizational roles are analyzed and programmes of improvement are elaborated and implemented. Close cooperation of local branches with the headquarters of the Institute in Warsaw and with the local school superintendents provide possibilities of correcting steps taken at various levels of the system of educational management.

The actual organizational structure of the Institute of Teachers' Education was introduced quite recently, in 1973. It is not yet possible to give a reliable analysis of its activities. A preliminary assessment is, however, favourable.

The most important achievement of the Institute is opening in January of 1974 of the Radio and Television Teachers' University. It is one of the institutional forms of education and professional improvement of already employed teachers and of the managerial educational staff. The Radio and Television Teachers' University is a teaching unit of the Institute, run jointly with the educational offices of the Polish Radio - and Television. The programme of the University is carried out by radio lectures of 20 minutes each and television lectures of 30 minutes. Lectures, bibliography and questions for self-control are also published in the weekly "Oświata i Wychowanie". Local branches of the Institute organize consultation units. They give individual and collective consultation in form of meetings with students on Saturdays and Sundays. Final examinations are also organized in local branches of the Institute.

It should be noted that the lectures of the Radio and Television Teachers' University form an obligatory part of the curriculum of extramural studies run for teachers by institutions of higher education.

Preparation of curricula and instruction means is also the task of top authorities responsible for the implementation of the educational policy. Their freedom of action is limited not only by disposable material means. The content of curricula depends on the general level of students and teachers. Qualifications of the latter ones are particularly important. As to instruction means, the competence of their authors and information which they have about the general level of pupils and teachers are equally essential. This is because means of instruction should be adequate to the level of perception of both pupils and teachers. Uniform curricula and economies of scale favour uniform means of instruction. Their skilful adaptation to the perception of groups of pupils coming from various local surroundings requires highly skilled teachers. Preparation of curri-

cula and means of instruction is, therefore, a complex process. For its implementation the Ministry of Education uses the help of its Institute of School Programmes. The main tasks of this research institute are as follows: elaboration of programmes and curricula of particular subjects included in general education at primary and secondary level; elaboration of forms and methods of implementation of these programmes with consideration of available means of instruction; elaboration of general rules concerning the content and methods used in textbooks for pupils and teachers; initiation of publications and assessment of published textbooks.

The work of the Institute is exclusively of research character. Decisions concerning the content of curricula and means of instruction to be used are made exclusively by the Ministry of Education. Both the Ministry and the Institute of School Programmes co-operate closely in these matters with other institutes dependent on the Ministry, viz. the Institute of Teachers' Education, the Institute of Pedagogic Research and the Institute of Research on Youth. The aim of the Institute of Pedagogic Research is to perform basic research work concerning education. Research is being centered here not only around pedagogical but also around organizational and economic problems of education. The aim of the Institute of Research on Youth is the analysis of demographic, social, psychological and other conditions of the educational system and of development of young people. The results of the Institute research should be implemented in school activities in process of shaping the attitudes of pupils.

Provision of accomodation and of teaching and auxiliary equipment is the duty of the intermediate and executive levels of the educational system. The intermediate level, i.e. school superintendents, are responsible for securing of material means. The implementation of this task requires on one hand a proper identification of needs, and on the other hand - suitable coordination of action with the local organs of state administration as disposers of regional budgets. Recognition of needs is first of all the task

of headmasters of given schools. The needs should be reported to the school superintendents and then verified by them in the light of educational tasks indicated by the top-level administration and of available material means. Information about the latter is obtained by contacts with local organs of state authority and administration. Thus needs reported by schools can be verified upwards or downwards depending on instructions issued by the central authorities, and on local possibilities of action. Decision making concerning material conditions of activities of schools is, therefore, an iterative process, in which the school superintendent exchanges information with the Ministry of Education, with local organs of state authority and administration that cooperate with him, and with schools which he supervises. Much depends also on the inventiveness of the school headmaster who can more or less skilfully use material means being at his disposal in the teaching process. The school headmaster makes decisions which eventually lead to a worse or better use of material means. Among these decisions are: planning of the time table of classes, planning of the use of accomodation, planning of cooperation with other schools and extra-scolar institutions. The latter can be particularly helpful in overcoming material difficulties. Cooperation may take the form of giving access to accomodations and means of instruction or of transfering such facilities to schools. Actions of this kind obviously require approval of the school superintendent.

Proper combination of the above mentioned factors, i.e. suitably prepared teaching staff, adequate curricula and means of instruction as well as school accomodation and its teaching and auxiliary equipment is the basic task of executive units. Collective community school the activities of which are dispersed has a particular role to be played here. An efficient implementation of the goals of the school requires close cooperation of its headmaster with the administrative and economic authorities of community. This cooperation concerns mostly such matters as transportation of children to school, provision of housing for teachers, rational use of the dispersed network of teaching and social accomodations, etc.

The school headmasters are under permanent supervision of school superintendents. This supervision means not only control of congruency of taken decisions with the principles of the adopted educational policy, but also help and instruction connected with the implementation of this task.

4. The structure of decision-making processes within the framework of post-primary education

Unlike primary education, the post-primary one is not obligatory in Poland. In the school year 1975/76 only 71 per cent of young people aged 15-18 attended schools. Hence, independently of all factors mentioned and discussed above which remain valid also for the level of education being analyzed at this point, a basic element of planning consists here in fixing the rate of scolarization and its directions. The rate of scolarization is determined at one hand by social and individual aspirations and on the other one by material conditions of society, the balance of labour force and the demand for particular kinds of labour.

The balance of labour force influences the rate and directions of scolarization at post-primary level in a twofold way. First, the demand for highly skilled technicians and skilled workers leads to assessment of needs for vocational education. These needs are determined for particular regions of the country and for branches and economic sectors. After being agreed upon by the Planning Commission [taking into consideration demographic projections] they become the basis for decisions made jointly by the leading authorities of particular sectors of economy and the educational authorities. These decisions concern directions and levels of vocational education.

Some post-primary vocational schools are run by the Ministry of Education, they are directly subordinated to the educational authorities. The other ones are subordinated to economic organizations which finance their activities. However the educational authorities control these activities

because of the need to maintain qualitative conditions necessary to secure unification of diplomas and permeability of the educational system. In the usual situation in which vocational schools are run by the educational authorities, their activities are additionally financed by economic organizations. Also the programme of training, employment of alumni and elaboration and modification of curricula need close cooperation with these organizations. In the case of vocational schools supervised by economic organizations the educational authorities do not have to plan their budgets. They are still responsible however for the standard of education, its curricula, means of instruction, etc.

The activities of particular vocational schools are controlled, as the activities of primary schools, by the offices of school superintendents. The Ministry of Education assisted by its Institute of Vocational Education performs planning and makes projections of development of vocational schools against the background of the whole educational, social and economic system. It also elaborates their curricula and develops means of instruction needed for implementation of performed tasks. The results of research work of the Institute are submitted to the Ministry, and form the basis of long-range projects as also of decisions and guidelines currently given to the offices of school superintendents in order to direct their activities with respect to particular schools.

Secondly, the demand for low-skilled labour provides a barrier to scolarization at post-primary level even in an abstract situation, in which there are no other [material or non-material] limitations. Therefore a decision concerning the rate and directions of scolarization at post-primary level is a basic political decision, formed as a result of the confrontation of social aspirations with practical possibilities of their realization and also with the overall needs which have to be met. Practically this decision is the outcome of balances of demand for skilled labour which are being prepared at some periods of time. Such balances are prepared at the level of individual enterprises, branches and sectors

of economy. Later they are corrected by the Planning Commission in the light of existing demographic projections, and finally agreed upon with voivodship and central organs of educational policy [which themselves also need some skilled labour].

As individual decisions concerning the continuation of education at post-primary level are free, the instruments for implementation of decisions concerning the rate and directions of scolarization are limited to the system of salaries and other benefits connected with undertaking of a job, and a more or less rigorous system of assessing qualifications required for further studies, which may be based on entrance examinations. The equalization of social chance is effected through the development of extra-mural education as also through so-called informal education, i.e. mentioned above courses at various levels.

Decision about the rate of scolarization, relatively detailed in the case of vocational schools, is less rigorous with respect to general secondary schools. There are two reasons for this difference. Firstly, vocational education is more expensive than general one, it is specialized and requires adequate teaching staff and means of instruction. If proper proportions are not maintained, this is likely to lower the standard of education. Secondly, deviations with elaborate plans of training skilled staff create difficulties in finding suitable jobs for the alumni of vocational schools. This danger does not exist for alumni of general schools. This is because their general education forms only the basis of future professional specialization. Unavoidable planning errors lead in Poland to a gradual widening of the profile of vocational education. More and more attention is being given to provide the pupils with ability to adapt themselves to changing conditions of work. To some degree vocational schools make their profile similar to that of the general schools. In turn the latter ones emphasize more and more the general technical education of their pupils. This is an element of preparation for the reorganization of the whole educational system on the basis of the universal obligatory 10-year

school, with the underlying assumption that education should be permanent, and with full freedom to enter or leave it.

5. The structure of decision-making processes within the framework of higher education

Scolarization at the level of higher education is most accurately planned according to the described above procedure, i.e. on the basis of detailed balances of qualified staff. This is connected with the high cost of educating specialists at this level, and also with their important role in society. As the time-lag between notification of needs for specialists and their output is particularly wide, a tendency of widening the educational profiles for various fields of study is recently observed in Poland. According to this tendency narrowing of specialization comes only through specialist and post-diploma studies. This is also a part of preparation for a gradual introduction of permanent education. Post graduate education is still very limited, however. In 1975 the number of students at this level was only 10570, and the number of graduates 6379. Thus permanent education is only a tendency. From a formal standpoint a fairly detailed planning procedure is still prevailing. The appearance of such a tendency and the adaptation of activities of some schools to its requirements is caused by the specific situation of Polish institutions of higher education as compared with other units of the educational system. This specific situation lies in their much greater autonomy. Higher education is the only two-stage administrative system in the country. Curricula are unified only to such extent as to ensure equivalence of diplomas and horizontal permeability of studies. Financial system induces institutions of higher education to make didactic experiments jointly with economic organizations, for the benefit of which education takes place. Autonomy of institutions of higher education does not mean their isolation from social needs. Quite on the contrary, the development of a school depends on its proper cooperation with local authorities as also with local social and economic organizations. Proper functioning of the school requires material and

organizational assistance of these organizations. The ministry has to see, whether the links with the local environment do not impair the countrywide goals of the school. The academic leadership of an institution of higher education which is unable to effectively cooperate with the local authorities can rely only on the ministry, which has limited means at its disposal. In such a case better integration of the school with its environment must be sought for by the ministry as well as by the school leadership.

The autonomy of institutions of higher education is obviously not complete. As they are relatively few in number, the basic directions and methods of their activity can be successfully planned and controlled by the supervising ministry. This ministry fixes admission limits for various fields of studies, estimates the cost of educating graduates of particular faculties, bears most of the expenditures connected with this education, issues plans and curricula of studies, supervises the process of promotion to the position of professor, makes analysis of suitability of specific curricula for jobs actually taken by graduates. The Ministry of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology is not the only ministry which supervises the activities of institutions of higher education. In Poland this ministry supervises only universities, polytechnics and higher technological schools, academies of agriculture, academies of economics, higher teacher's schools and academies of theology. The remaining institutions of higher education are supervised by branch ministries, medical academies - by the Ministry of Health and Social Care, higher schools of art - by the Ministry of Culture and Arts, physical culture academies - by the Main Committee of Physical Culture and Tourism, etc. All ministers who supervise institutions of higher educations are assisted by the academic staff of these schools which forms advisory bodies convened to analyze curricula, means of instruction, etc. These advisory bodies are called programme committees. Without their cooperation a competent control of schools activities by the ministry would be impossible. Another form of advisory body which at the same time plays the role of two-way trans-

mission of information are conferences of rectors and deans organized by the particular ministries. They are an important form of two-sided exchange of information and opinions concerning particular problems connected with activities of given kind of institutions of higher education [e.g. universities]. The most important collective advisory body of the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology is the Supreme Council for Sciences, Higher Education and Technology, composed of one hundred members from among the most outstanding scientists. The President of the Council is nominated by the Prime-Minister from the members of Presidium of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The activities of the Council concern the whole system of higher education [as also the whole system of scientific research]. This is connected with the coordinating and leading role of the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology with respect to all institutions of higher education. Those schools which are supervised by other ministers receive from them various guidelines, the general conception of which originates in the Ministry of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology. This is so because the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology is the central organ of the state administration, responsible for implementation of the educational policy within the whole system of higher education. The same is also true for the relationships between the Minister and the only private institution of higher education, viz. the Catholic University in Lublin. Although this university is financed from private funds and is not formally submitted to the organs of state administration, its activities are coordinated by the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology. Such a coordination is first of all necessary for ensuring equivalence of diplomas and for possibility of horizontal mobility of students of various schools.

Carrying out his administrative and coordinating functions the Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology uses not only his own executive staff - the ministry and its professorial advisory bodies. Permanent assistance is also provided by directly subordinated to him In-

stitute of Science Policy, Technological Progress and Higher Education, whose research profile corresponds to the profile of activities of the Ministry. In the field of higher education the Institute performs research concerning: forecasting and planning of employment of staff with higher education; problems of economy, organization and infrastructure of education; profiles and employment of graduates; attitudes of students; broadly understood didactics of higher education, with particular emphasis on ways of transmitting knowledge. The Institute does also perform large scale research in science policy area, especially on problems of connections between research units and units of the national economy. The research profile of the Institute clearly reflects the organic link between higher education and the countrywide system of research. This link is a basic prerequisite of the functioning of a separate organ of the state administration, responsible i.a. for the implementation of the educational policy in the area of higher education. This has already been mentioned in section 2.

A specific role is played in Poland by post-secondary vocational schools. Unlike institutions of higher education they are directly subjected to the particular school superintendents. These schools play important role in the training of auxiliary technical staff of fairly high qualifications. On the other hand they are a form of unexpensive, short term [mostly two-year courses] schooling of the young people who do not want higher education. The number of students of these schools increases at a faster rate than the number of students enrolled by the institutions of higher education. Because of the short duration of education the planning of demand for alumni is not subject to such large an error as is the case for universities and the like schools. As these schools are subordinated to superintendents it is possible to react quickly to surpluses of alumni of secondary schools who are not absorbed by the system of higher education and do not find employment in the national economy. Thus locally taken decisions enable to solve local problems relatively quickly. On the other hand the relatively wide profile of education enables many

alumni of these schools to find jobs in various sectors of the national economy. This concerns e.g. clerks, shorthand typists, interpretors, designers, decorators, etc. Therefore this form of education seems to be suitable for future conditions and it is intended to be used as an element of the educational system based on the 10-year universal school. At present however, a real problem is non-permeability of these schools. Their alumni have no access to higher education. Because of that these schools are often considered unattractive for talented and ambitious young people.

6. Tendencies

Basic tendencies already appearing and being considered in discussion about reform of the educational system consist in transforming it into an open system of permanent education. The openness of the system would mean non obligatory character of education at any level except pre-school and primary level. Permanency would consist in permeability enabling a student to leave and to enter the system at any level [above the 10-year school]. Moreover, permanency would mean the specialization of students only at higher educational levels, which would allow for successive changes of specialization on the basis of the attained general education.

Another tendency is the regional planning of the whole educational system in certain macroregions. The macroregion is a unit for the territorial balancing of long-term plans and forecasts of socio-economic development of the country.

Poland is divided into eight macroregions of equal rank, covering all 49 voivodships. The boundaries of macroregions as also existing organizational units of higher education are shown on fig. 5. The macroregion is exclusively a planning unit [not an administrative one]. The scope of planning work undertaken for particular macroregions comprises:

- elaboration of drafts of long-term socio-economic development plans in conjunction with territorial development,
- programming of development and territorial arrangement of facilities

of technical infrastructure and of services of higher rank [i.a. educational ones] serving the needs of the population of more than one voivodship.

The gradually stronger connection of educational activities with the needs of local communities and the obvious necessity to influence these needs clearly creates a tendency to regional planning particularly at higher levels of the educational system. In such a planning institutions of higher education could become the organizers of the educational process adapted to the needs of macroregions. As macroregions are not administrative units, but only planning ones, this would not entail any limitation of the role of the educational administration. Its activities would be only supplemented by the inspiratory and leading role of institutions of higher education.

FIG. 1. POLISH EDUCATION (AS TODAY)

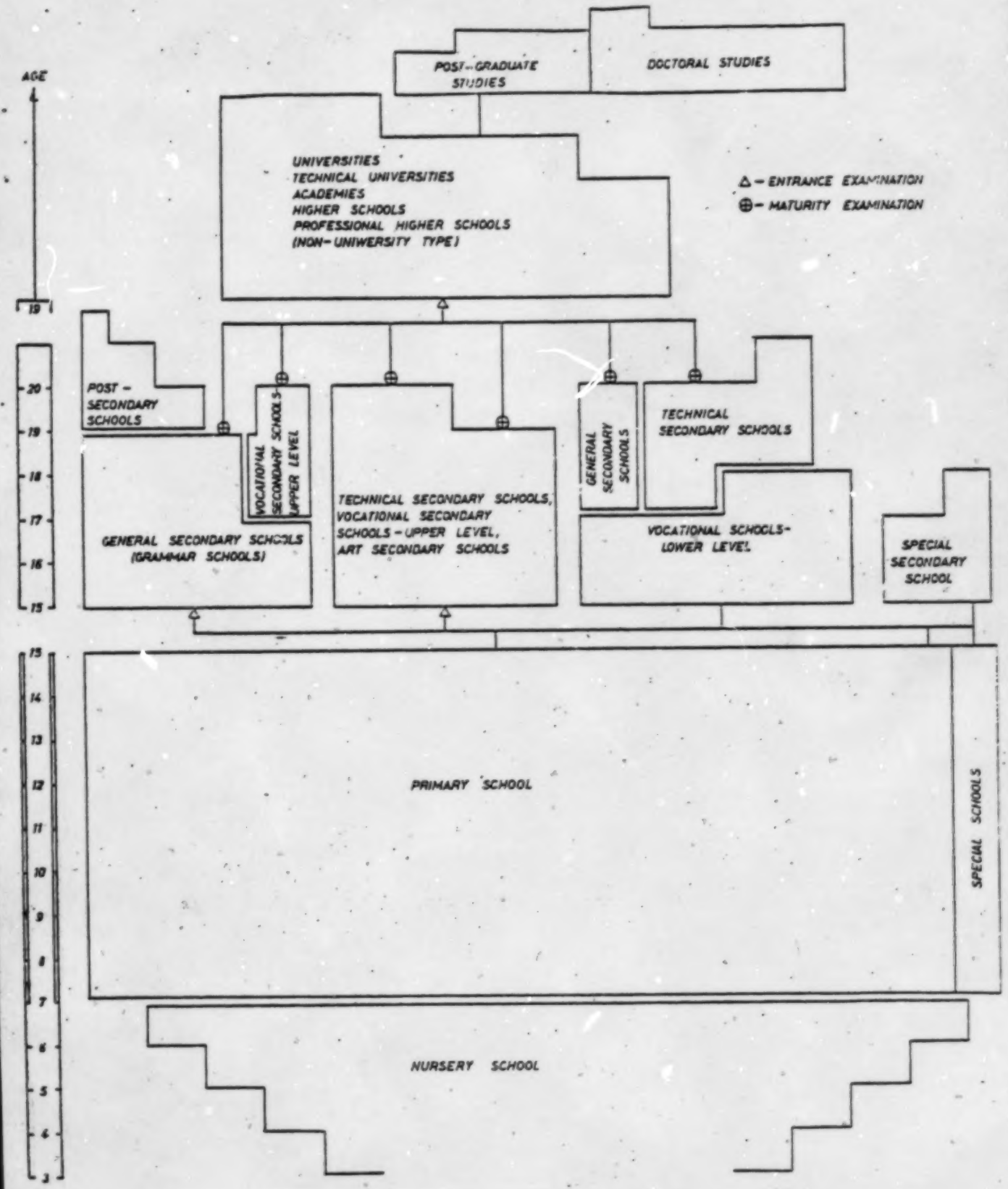


FIG.2 PROPOSED SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

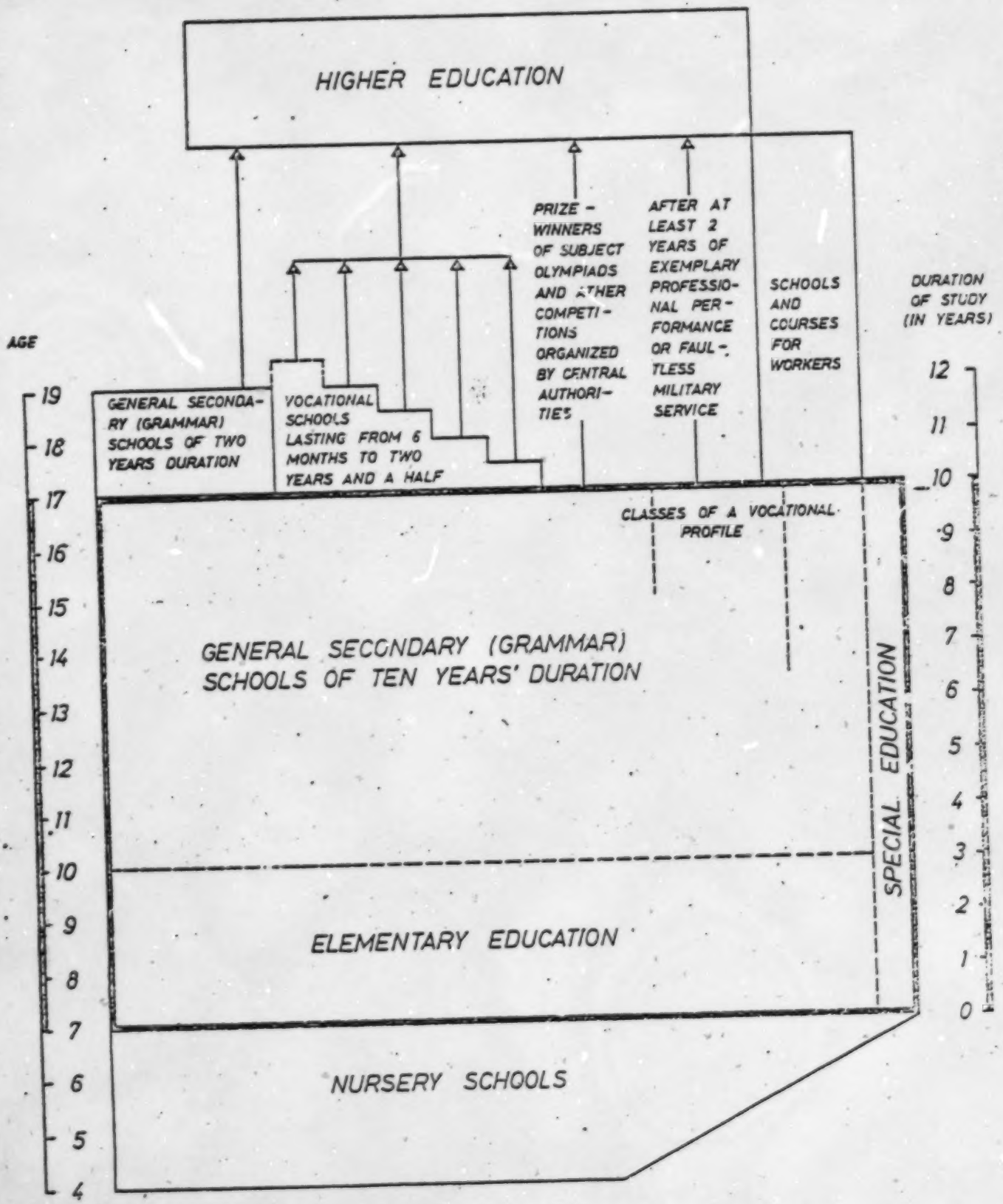


FIG.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

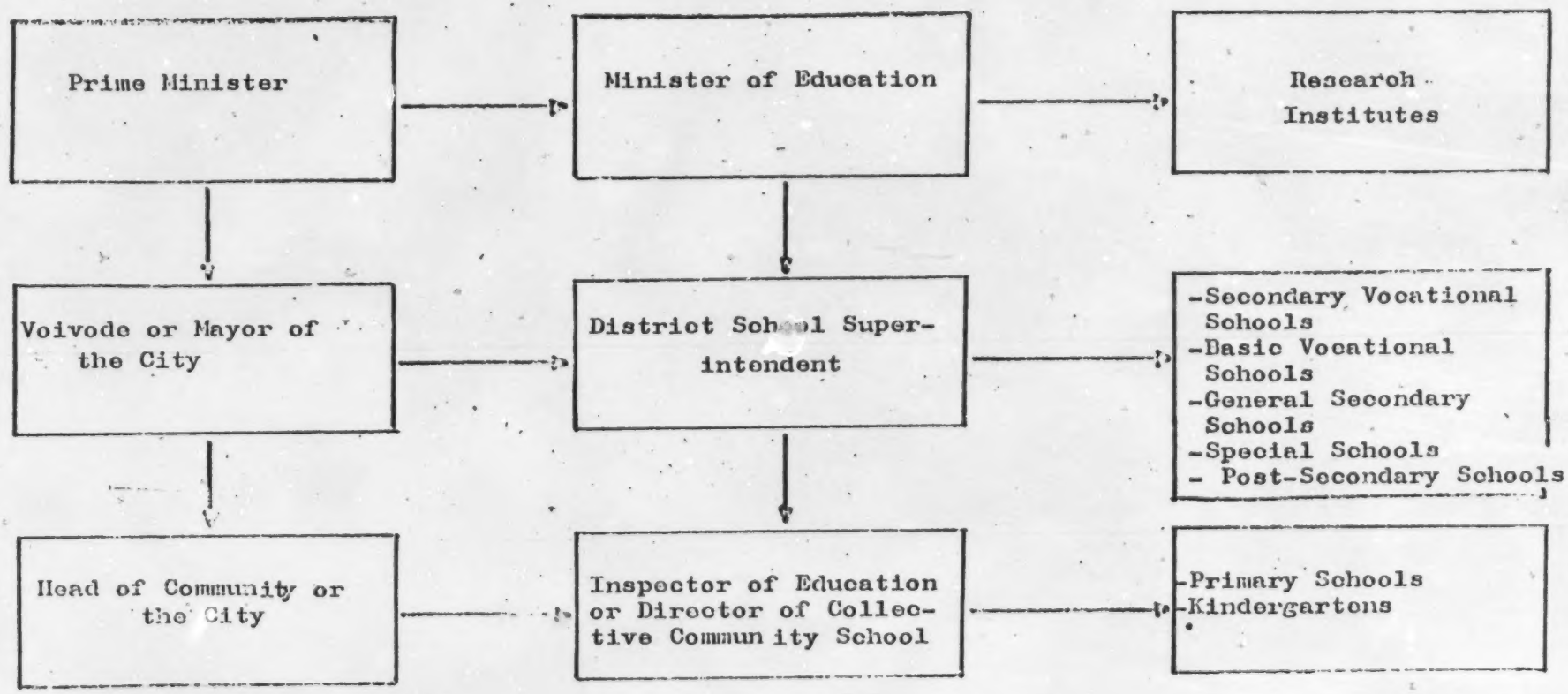


FIG.4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

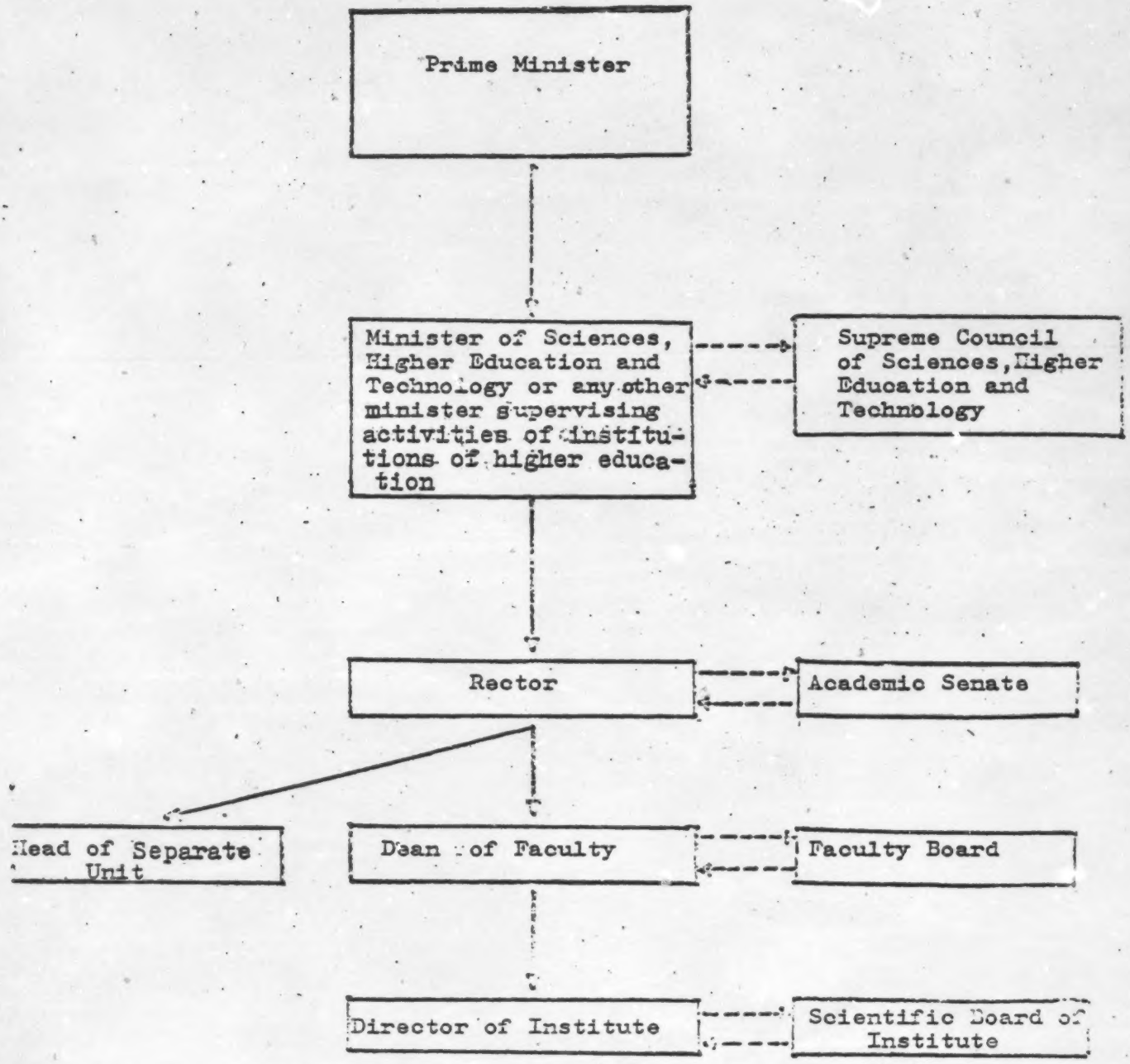
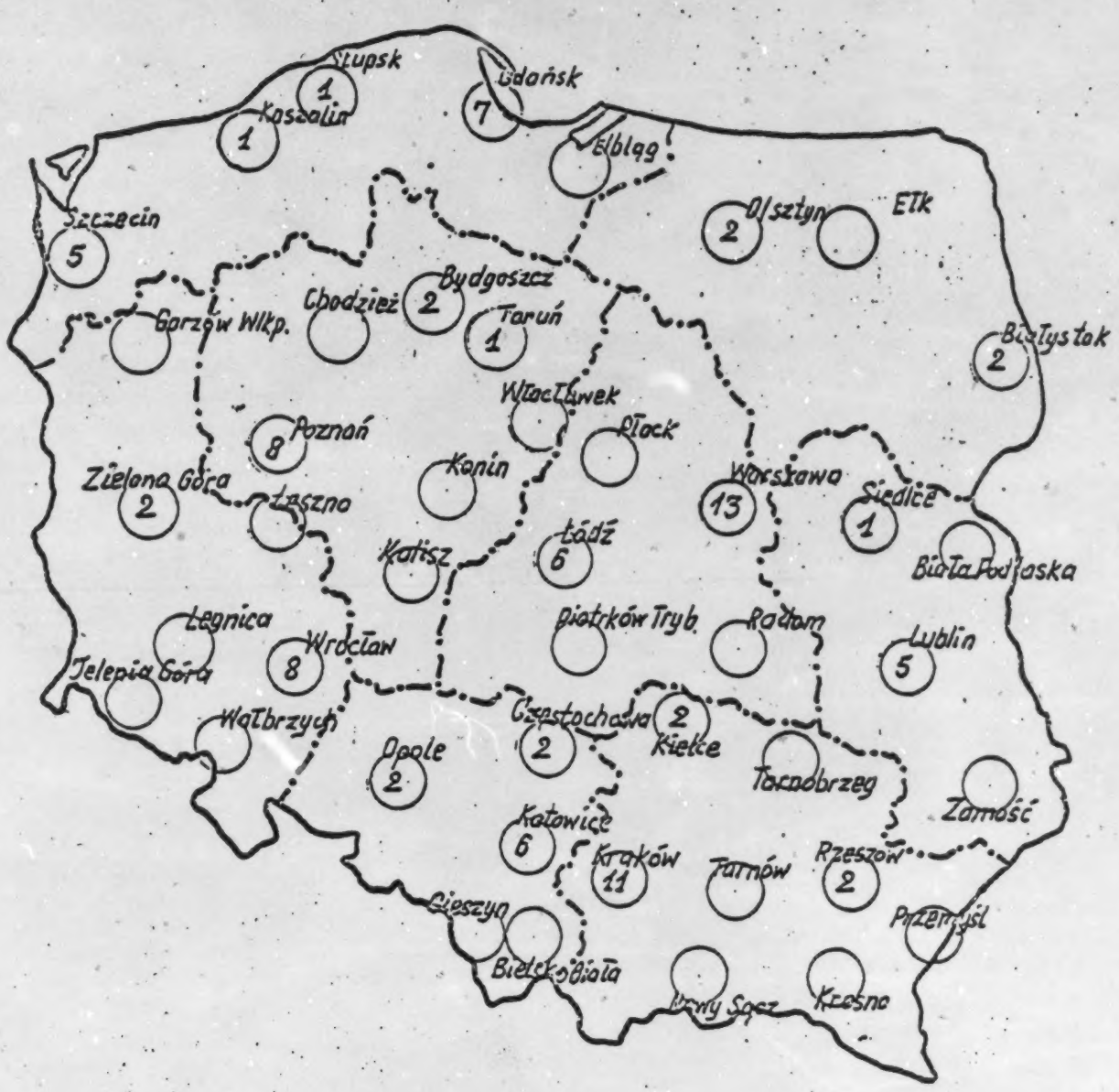

Prime Minister
Minister of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology or any other minister supervising activities of institutions of higher education
Supreme Council of Sciences, Higher Education and Technology
Rector
Academic Senate
Head of Separate Unit
Dean of Faculty
Faculty Board
Director of Institute
Scientific Board of Institute

Fig. 5 Institutions of higher education in macroregions



(8) Centers of higer education and numbers of universities

○ Campuses and branches

—·—·— Boundaries of macroregions